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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 TEL AVIV 006238

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

NEA FOR BURNS/SATTERFIELD/DIBBLE;
NEA/SA/EX FOR RICHIE; DEPT FOR DS/IP/ITA; DEPT FOR
DS/IP/NEA;
DRL FOR A/S CRANER; NSC FOR ABRAMS/DANIN;
USAID FOR DCHA, DCHA/FPP, PRM FOR DEWEY/GREENE

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KWBG](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [ASEC](#) [CASC](#) [GZ](#) [IS](#)

SUBJECT: WB/G SITREP: FOUR PALESTINIANS KILLED IN RAFAH:
DECEMBER 9, 2004 (1200 HOURS LOCAL)

This is a joint ConGen Jerusalem/Embassy Tel Aviv cable.

1. (SBU) Summary: IDF soldiers shot and killed four Palestinians in two separate incidents December 8-9 while the men were attempting to smuggle weapons across the Gaza-Egyptian border at Rafah. A fifth Palestinian was seriously wounded. In addition to the small number of laborers being allowed to enter Israel at Erez, the IDF decided December 9 to allow national staff of UN organizations, with prior approval from the IDF, to cross at Erez in vehicles rather than on foot. In the West Bank, the IDF demolished December 8 a house in the village of al-Jib north of Jerusalem for lacking a building permit, and arrested at least nine Palestinians during arrest operations in the West Bank, including a PFLP activist in Ramallah. End Summary.

West Bank

2. (SBU) ATTACKS:

-- Deaths: Nil.

-- Injury: Nil.

3. (SBU) ARRESTS/SECURITY:

-- Arrests: The IDF December 8-9 arrested at least nine Palestinians during arrest operations in the West Bank, including a PFLP activist in Ramallah.

4. (SBU) DEMOLITIONS:

-- The IDF demolished December 8 a house in the village of al-Jib north of Jerusalem for lacking a building permit.

5. (SBU) POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS:

-- The Palestinian leadership is scheduled to begin December 12 a five-day tour of the Gulf states with meetings in Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Oman, and the UAE.

Gaza

6. (SBU) ATTACKS:

-- Deaths: UNRWA reported that IDF soldiers shot and killed four Palestinians, reportedly all armed, in two incidents overnight December 8-9 as the Palestinians attempting to smuggle weapons across the Gaza-Egyptian border at Rafah. A fifth Palestinian was seriously wounded, according to the IDF.

-- Injuries: UNRWA reported that IDF soldiers shot a 60-year-old man in the leg over December 8-9 when he wandered too close to Netzarim settlement. The man was widely known to be mentally disabled, according to UNRWA.

-- Mortars/Rockets: The IDF reported that a total of five mortar shells were fired at Israeli settler and IDF targets in the Gaza Strip December 8-9, and two anti-tank missiles were fired at Nissanit settlement December 8, according to the IDF.

-- Shootings: The IDF reported that Palestinian militants launched a total of three shooting attacks December 8-9, two near Rafah and one near Neve Dekalim.

-- Explosions: The IDF reported that IDF soldiers found and safely disposed of an IED discovered near an IDF outpost south of Rafah December 8.

17. (SBU) INCURSIONS/DEMOLITIONS:

-- Catch-up item: UNRWA reported that IDF tanks and bulldozers uprooted 40 dunams of citrus and olive groves and destroyed roads and infrastructure during the December 6-7 incursion into the area west of Karni Crossing.

18. (SBU) BORDER CROSSINGS:

-- Route Four (Salahadeen Road), the main north-south traffic artery, was open December 9, with a major detour at Netzarim Junction.

-- Erez Crossing was open for internationals and for a limited number of Palestinians December 8, and 237 agricultural laborers and 64 merchants crossed. UNRWA reported that the IDF will now allow national staff of UN organizations to cross at Erez in vehicles, rather than on foot, with prior coordination through COGAT.

-- The Erez Industrial Zone remained closed December 9.

-- Sufa Crossing was closed for Palestinian laborers December 9, but was open for the import of aggregates used in construction.

-- Karni Terminal was open December 9, but reportedly operating slowly.

-- Rafah Terminal was open for arrivals and departures December 9. Although the IDF no longer prohibits the exit of male Palestinians age 16-35 from the Gaza Strip, lengthy checks at the border mean that few Palestinians in this category are actually able to exit. There are no age restrictions for entry into Gaza.

-- Tel al-Sultan checkpoint was open December 9. Toufah checkpoint was open for residents of al-Mowassi.

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